

TOPIC 3: yourCHOICE

Helpings vs. Servings

Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Visualize serving sizes
- ❖ Compare their helpings to serving sizes:
 - Helpings are “unmeasured” amounts of foods one chooses.
 - Servings are “measured” amounts of foods one chooses.
- ❖ Tell someone why it’s smart to pay attention to how much food he or she eats.
- ❖ Explain why active living helps them use food energy (calories) from the food they eat.
- ❖ Prepare an easy, tasty snack.

Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Control the amounts and kinds of foods you eat to get enough of the nutrients you need. That will help you avoid overdoing any one specific food or food group. The amount of food you eat may be bigger or smaller than the serving shown on the food label or the Food Guide Pyramid.
- ❖ Eat different kinds of foods. You’ll improve your chances of getting the many nutrients your body needs for energy and for growing strong and healthy.
- ❖ Eating too much may add up to more food energy (calories) than your body needs to grow and move. Extra calories are turned into body fat.

Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Size “Squared”*** - Preteens explore the concept of serving size with what seems an unrelated activity: taking several toilet paper squares (or paper clips), the number depending on their own choice. They’ll also review what they observed when they participated in previous *Power of Choice* activities.

- 1 Some or the Whole Thing?*** - Preteens pour out what they usually eat for a snack and then measure how much it is compared to the label-size serving.
- 2 Snacks—How Much in a Package?** - Using different packages of snacks, preteens discover why they need to pay attention to serving sizes.
- 3 Visual Cues** - Preteens use visual cues, such as a baseball, and *Nutrition Facts Cards* to explore serving sizes.
- 4 Dance Snack Calories Away!** - Preteens “dance away” snack calories, as they discover how much they need to move to use up the food energy (calories) from one serving of their snack.
- 5 (Afterschool Snack) Stuffing a Pocket Sandwich** - As they make their afterschool snack, they consider how much they tuck inside a Stuffed Pocket Sandwich.

(Wrap up) **What’s yourCHOICE?** - To put their own “power of choice” in action, they come up with their own ways to pay attention to how much they eat.

*Adapted from *Go Girls!*

Getting Ready

● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

● Display Posters:

- ❖ *Feed Me!*
- ❖ *Move It!*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*

● Get:

For "Size 'Squared' "

- ❖ Large toilet paper roll with perforated squares (or large container of paper clips)

For "Some or the Whole Thing?"

- ❖ Two large bags of dry snack foods: regular and lowfat
- ❖ Several sizes of bowls
- ❖ Measuring cup

For "Snacks—How Much in a Package?"

- ❖ Candy bars: regular and larger sizes
- ❖ Potato chips: 1 ounce, 1.5 ounces, 2 ounces
- ❖ Pretzels: 1 ounce, 1.5 ounces, 2 ounces
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*

For "Visual Cues"

- ❖ Deck of cards, baseball, tennis ball, Ping-Pong ball. Others are optional; see "Do You Know...?" on the next page for ideas.
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*
 - Single foods work best, such as oranges/bread/juice, not mixed foods—such as pizza.

For "Dance Snack Calories Away"

- ❖ Tape recorder and audiotape or CD player and CD with music for slow and fast dancing

For "Stuffing a Pocket Sandwich" (snack activity)*

- ❖ Ingredients: pocket bread or whole-wheat bread, cheese slices, sliced meat,** lettuce, tomato, lowfat salad dressings
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board, knives, grater, paper plates with utensils to serve ingredients
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, forks, napkins

* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 piece pocket bread or whole-wheat bread and 1 ounce cheese slices.**

** *Vary the sandwich, making it a veggie pocket made with beans instead of sliced meat.*

For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout*** for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

*** Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

Do You Know...?

Healthy food choices are part of growing healthy. Most preteens know the basics of healthy eating. They know about the Food Guide Pyramid. Yet many don't consume enough fruits,

vegetables, whole grains, and calcium-rich foods. Many eat a lot of foods with more fat and sugar. Paying attention to serving sizes helps you find out if you eat enough or too much of some foods.

How often do you need each kind of food?

The Food Guide Pyramid tells you how many servings based on your calorie needs. Each day eat at least the smaller number of servings from all five major food groups. Older children and teens need three servings of foods from the milk group each day. For some food groups, you need more servings than for others.

Growing preteens and teens often have bigger appetites and may need several servings at one time. The amount you need depends on how active you are. The more you move, the more food energy (calories) you need. The more you move, the more you can eat without gaining weight.

How much do you eat and need? Serving sizes on food labels and the Pyramid help you judge how much you eat. This information can help you judge whether you're getting enough or too much of different kinds of foods.

What is a serving size? It's a measuring tool. Just by looking, most people don't know how much a serving is. Visual cues can help you estimate how much you eat. The amount of food you usually eat may be bigger or smaller than a Pyramid or Nutrition Facts serving.

Serving size visual cues:

- ❖ Deck of cards = 3 ounces meat, poultry, or fish
- ❖ Ping-Pong ball = 1 ounce hard cheese or 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- ❖ Baseball = 1 medium fruit or 1 cup lettuce, or cereal, or milk
- ❖ Tennis ball = $\frac{3}{4}$ cup juice
- ❖ 8-ounce glass = 1 serving milk
- ❖ 12-ounce glass = 2 servings juice or $1\frac{1}{2}$ servings milk
- ❖ 6-inch plate = 1 tortilla (6 inches)
- ❖ Computer mouse = 1 medium potato
- ❖ 4-inch CD = 1 pancake or waffle
- ❖ Hockey puck = 1 bagel
- ❖ Two 9 volt batteries = $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces cheese, cheddar

How big are food-group servings? These are serving sizes from the five major food groups in the Pyramid:

Bread, Cereal, Pasta, and Rice Group

- ❖ 1 slice bread, tortilla, waffle, or pancake
- ❖ about 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal
- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ bagel, hamburger bun, or English muffin

Vegetable Group

- ❖ 1 cup raw, leafy vegetables
- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetables (cooked or raw)
- ❖ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetable juice

Fruit Group

- ❖ 1 medium apple, banana, or orange
- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit (canned, cooked, or raw)
- ❖ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fruit juice
- ❖ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried fruit

Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group

- ❖ 1 cup milk or yogurt
- ❖ $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces natural cheese
- ❖ 2 ounces process cheese

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, Nuts Group

- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked dry beans, 1 egg, or 2 tablespoons peanut butter count as 1 ounce meat
- ❖ 2 to 3 ounces cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish count as one serving

How can you stick to one serving? Try this:

- ❖ Skip the urge to eat from the bag. Measure out a serving; put the rest away.
- ❖ Buy single serving packages or containers instead of big bags or containers. If you buy several small containers—perhaps chips, sodas, candies, or cookies—eat one, and put the rest away.
- ❖ If you buy large containers, measure out several single serving amounts; put them in separate bags or small containers. Hungry? Eat just the amount in one small bag/container.

Tip for Leaders:

Check the chart entitled **How many Pyramid Servings do YOU need each day?** in the Computer Disk Supplement, page D-16. Avoid counting calories or fat grams.

What happens if you consume fewer or more calories (food energy) than your body uses? You need to know how much you eat compared to the Pyramid servings.

- ❖ *If you don't eat enough*, you may not get all the nutrients you need for energy and for growing strong and healthy. When you eat less food (calories) than your body needs, you lose weight.
- ❖ *If you eat too much*, you may get more food energy (calories) than you need to grow and move. Then you gain weight. If you move more, your body uses up more food energy. Then you won't need to be as concerned about how much you eat.

Tips for Leaders:

Preteens may want to eat smaller amounts of foods if they are watching their weight. Preteens concerned about weight loss should talk to a doctor or health provider about their weight. Eating right—*not dieting*—can help them reach the right weight, while supporting growth.

The Food Guide Pyramid

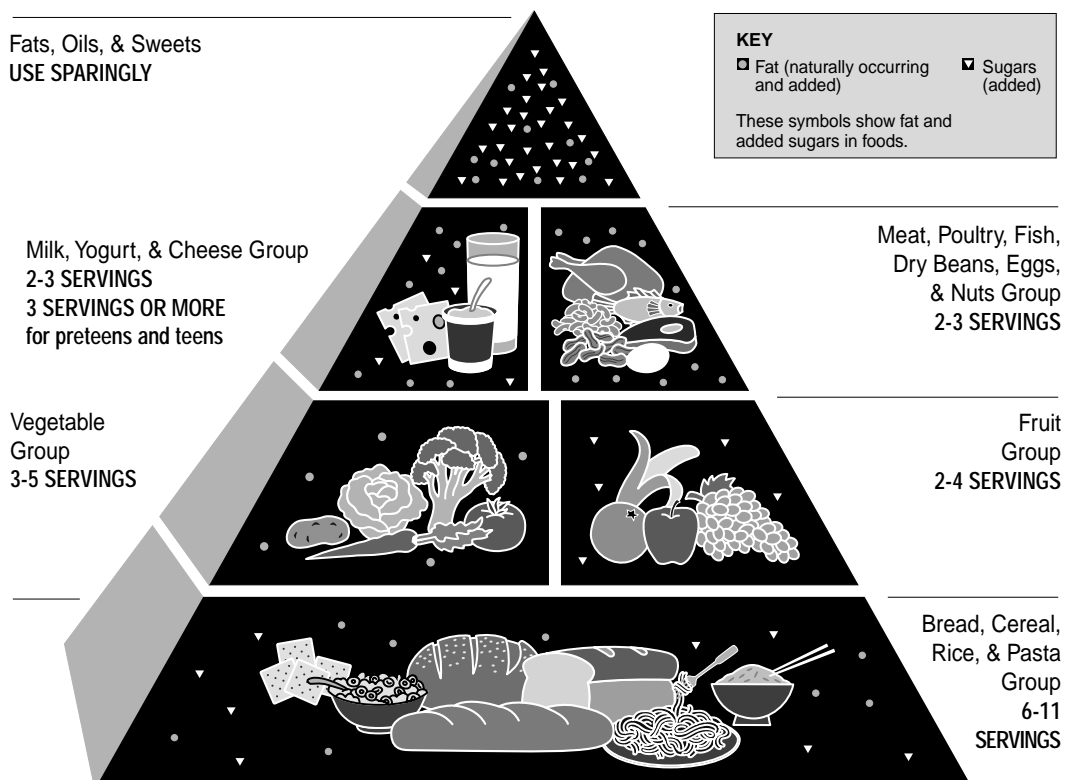
Fats, Oils, & Sweets
USE SPARINGLY

KEY

◻ Fat (naturally occurring and added)

◻ Sugars (added)

These symbols show fat and added sugars in foods.



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

yourCHOICE Helpings vs. Servings

Topic 3 Activities

Getting Started: Size “Squared”

Start with an icebreaker to get preteens thinking about amounts, and review what they learned last time you met.

Start focusing their thinking and talking on choices as preteens take a simple prop—a roll of toilet paper (or a bowl of paper clips)! Now...

- ❖ **Pass around the roll of toilet paper or bowl of paper clips. Ask everyone to take some; avoid telling why.**
- ❖ **Talk about last week’s session as preteens take their toilet paper squares or paper clips.** Perhaps from Topic 2, what did it take to get you to move more and sit less?
- ❖ **Continue talking until the toilet paper roll or paper clip bowl has gone around the group.** By nature, some preteens will take more squares than others.
- ❖ **Have them count their toilet paper squares/paper clips.** For each square/clip preteens have, they can tell one thing they already learned about themselves and about staying healthy since they started *The Power of Choice*. Encourage them *not* to repeat. Any personal observations count as something they’ve learned.

When everyone has shared, continue talking. Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

- ❖ Would you have taken a different number of squares/clips if you had known what we would use them for? More? Less? Why?
- ❖ Why didn’t everyone take the same amount of squares/clips?
POINT OUT: We see things in different ways because our needs are different.

Activity 1: Some or the Whole Thing?

By measuring their snack, preteens see that they may eat more than they think! Use a large bag of dry snacks (pretzel bag, for example) to make this activity more successful; they'll probably take more from a bigger bag.

Involve preteens in the measuring demonstration with the bag of snacks, several bowls, and measuring equipment.

- ❖ **Get several volunteer preteens to fill a bowl with the amount they usually serve themselves.** Then have them measure the amount. Try to give everyone a chance.
- ❖ **Have them compare their “servings.”** **POINT OUT** that everyone had a different idea of a serving.
- ❖ **Have someone volunteer to check the serving size on the package.**

ASK:

- How does that label serving compare to yours? **Talk about** the serving size, the number of servings in the whole bag, the number of calories in a serving, and the number of calories in the whole bag.
- How many of you have read a food label? What did you look at?
POINT OUT: Even if people read the label, they usually don't pay attention to the serving size that's written at the top.

Challenge their thinking:

- ❖ How much of this snack do you usually eat?
- ❖ What happens to the calories and other nutrients when you eat that much? What if you eat the whole bag?
- ❖ Why pay attention to serving size? **POINT OUT:** When you eat more than the serving size on the label, it changes the amount of calories and nutrients in what you eat.
- ❖ How does this activity connect with what we just learned with our toilet paper squares? **POINT OUT:** Amount makes a difference.
- ❖ How can you stick to one serving if you eat this or any other snack?
- ❖ Why do you think amount makes a difference? **POINT OUT:** If you eat more food (calories) than you need, the extra calories get stored as body fat. If you don't eat enough, you might not get enough energy to move and grow or enough nutrients to grow and stay healthy.

If time permits, repeat the activity with a lowfat snack. Let them see that a large amount of a lowfat snack can still add up to a lot of calories!

Activity 2: Snacks—How Much in a Package?

Small, medium, or large? Preteens compare calories and fat in different-sized packages of common snack foods.

Distribute a set of *Nutrition Facts Cards* to the preteens. Also, put out several compact packages of candy, pretzels, and chips to talk about.

❖ **ASK:**

- Would you eat the whole snack at one time if you had picked these snacks, or would you save some?
 - How many servings does each package have? (Guess without looking at the label.)
 - Where does the label tell you how many servings in a package?
- ❖ Have them check each label to find out how many servings the package has and how many calories and how much fat one serving of each snack has.

Challenge their thinking:

- ❖ Now that you've checked the label, what do you think about eating the whole thing at one time? **POINT OUT:** Although small packages look like one serving, they may be more.
- ❖ How can you decide whether or not to eat the whole thing? **Encourage them:** Look at how many servings a package has before deciding to eat the whole thing.
- ❖ What can you say to a friend if he or she asks for your advice about eating the whole package or deciding to eat just part of it?
- ❖ How can you stick to one serving?

Activity 3: Visual Cues

Use visual cues to help preteens get to know serving sizes.

Put a deck of cards, baseball, tennis ball, and Ping-Pong ball where everyone can see them. Explain: each item is the size of a serving for some foods.

- ❖ **Have preteens organize the *Nutrition Facts Cards* based on serving size.** They will place the cards next to the visual cue that represents what they think a serving is for that food.
- ❖ **Talk about the serving size equivalents of each item.** Let preteens see if they can figure out the size of each visual cue: for example, 3 ounces, 1 cup, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, 2 ounces. (Check “Do You Know...?” on page 30.)
- ❖ **Let them use the serving size information on the *Nutrition Facts Cards*** to see how close they came to judging the serving sizes for these foods.

Talk about the activity:

- ❖ Were you surprised by the sizes of the servings? Why?
- ❖ Do you think you usually eat more or less than a serving for this snack?
- ❖ What happens to the amount of nutrients if you eat bigger amounts?
- ❖ How can you use these visual cues to guess serving sizes?

If time permits, have preteens use the *Feed Me!* poster to decide how each food from the *Nutrition Facts Cards* fits in a healthful way of eating. (ASK: How can you use information about serving sizes to eat more fruits and vegetables? More grains? More calcium-rich foods? Why is that a good idea?)

Activity 4: Dance Snack Calories Away!

Have preteens “dance away” snack calories, as they explore the link between the food energy from what they eat and the energy their bodies use.

Get moving—you, too, if you can!

- ❖ **Start with 2 or 3 minutes of slow music to warm up muscles.**
- ❖ **Turn up the beat for 10 minutes of fast dancing.**
- ❖ **Cool down with slower dancing.**

When the dancing is over, (ASK:)

- ❖ With 10 minutes of fast dancing, do you think you used up the food energy (calories) from a candy bar or bag of chips? (See Activity 2.) If not, how much longer do you think you’ll have to dance? **(POINT OUT:)** Ten minutes of fast dancing can use about 50 to 60 calories depending on how fast you move. Depending on your size, slow dancing uses up about 20 calories in 10 minutes.
- ❖ How long will you need to do fast dancing (no stopping) to use up the food energy from a whole package of candy or chips? How about slow dancing? **(POINT OUT:)** It may take more effort than you think to use up food energy from larger amounts of food! You’ll need to move longer and with more effort.
- ❖ How long will you need to dance if you eat one serving compared to eating the whole package?
- ❖ Now, what are the benefits of moving more and sitting less? **(POINT OUT:)** If you move more, you won’t need to worry quite as much about how much you eat. Besides, it’s fun to do active things, and moving your body is good for you.
- ❖ What else besides dancing can you do to move more and use up snack calories?

If time permits, invite preteens who joined in “Get Up and Move!” (Topic 2 Activities) to share more reasons to move more and sit less.

Activity 5: Stuffing a Pocket Sandwich

Have preteens make stuffed pocket sandwiches, talking about how much they tuck inside. (Option: make this sandwich with whole-wheat bread instead of pita.)

Prepare Stuffed Pocket Sandwiches:

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling food.**

Talk about and practice this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

Food Safety-Smarts: Wash cutting boards with hot, soapy water if you used them to cut meat, poultry, or fish *before* you cut vegetables and fruits. Rinse fruits and vegetables before cutting.

- ❖ **Have several volunteer preteens help get the snack ingredients ready:** Rinse tomatoes and lettuce; slice pocket bread/whole-wheat bread and tomatoes; shred lettuce; cut meat and cheese into strips; serve each ingredient on paper plates with utensils; shake and open salad dressings; set paper plates, forks, and napkins on the table. Place the *Nutrition Facts Cards* beside each ingredient.
- ❖ **Have everyone “stuff” ingredients in their pocket bread.** Encourage them to think about how much they put inside.

As they eat their Stuffed Pocket Sandwich, **ASK:**

- ❖ How would you rate a Stuffed Pocket Sandwich as a snack choice? They can refer to the *Feed Me!* and the *Read It Before You Eat It!* posters.
- ❖ How much of each ingredient did you stuff inside? How did it compare to a serving size?
- ❖ What type of Stuffed Pocket Sandwich can you make at home? What else can you put inside? How much? **Encourage** them to use plenty of vegetables and perhaps fruits. They can make an all-veggie stuffed pocket (no meat) with beans, and ask their families to get whole-grain bread or pita to make it!

Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans that help preteens pay attention to how much food they eat.

Review what they learned about this topic. Many people eat larger amounts of foods than they realize or than they need. (ASK:

- ❖ How can you figure out how much you eat?
- ❖ Why might you decide to eat less or more?
- ❖ How can you make changes? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to watch how much they eat. *(For example, GOAL: Cut back on how much soda I drink. Actions: Order a regular rather than a large or super-size drink at a fast-food place. Measure out my drink into a cup at home instead of drinking from the bottle or can. Buy soda in a small can not a large bottle.)*

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to be mindful of how much they eat. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.

